United Nations A/64/420

General Assembly

Distr.: General
14 December 2009

Original: English

Sixty-fourth session
Agenda item 53

Sustainable development

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 18 September 2009, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-fourth session the item entitled:

"Sustainable development:

"(a) Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development;

"(b) Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;

"(c) International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

"(d) Protection of global climate for present and future generations;

"(e) Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa;

"(f) Convention on Biological Diversity;

"(g) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session;

"(h) Sustainable mountain development;

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in 10 parts, under the symbol A/64/420 and Add.1-9.

09-64959 (E) 161209

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"(i) Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy"

and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Second Committee considered the item at its 27th to 31st meetings, from 2 to 4 November 2009. An account of the Committee's discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/64/SR.27-31). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 2nd to 7th meetings, from 5 to 7 October (see A/C.2/64/SR.2-7). Action was taken on the item at the 33rd to 35th and 39th meetings, on 10, 12 and 17 November and 4 December (see A/C.2/64/SR.33-35 and SR.39). An account of the Committee's further consideration of the item will be given in the addenda to the present report.

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

Item 53
Sustainable development

Report of the Secretary-General on the oil slick on Lebanese shores (A/64/259)

Notes by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system" and the comments of the Secretary-General and those of the United Nations Chief Executives Board for Coordination thereon (A/64/83-E/2009/83 and A/64/83/Add.1-E/2009/83/Add.1)

Letter dated 6 March 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/64/65)

Letter dated 12 May 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Namibia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/64/81)

Letter dated 30 September 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/64/489)

Letter dated 23 October 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.2/64/9)

Letter dated 28 October 2009 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.2/64/10)

Item 53 (a)
Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/64/275)

Report of the Secretary-General on the preparations for the International Year of Forests, 2011 (A/64/274)

Report of the Secretary-General on agricultural technology for development (A/64/258)

Report of the Secretary-General on the International Year of Sanitation, 2008 (A/64/169)

Letter dated 7 August 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/64/301)

Item 53 (b)
Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (A/64/278)

Item 53 (c)
International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (A/64/280)

Item 53 (d)
Protection of global climate for present and future generations

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (A/64/202)

Letter dated 20 October 2009 from the Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/C.2/64/11)

Item 53 (e)
Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (A/64/202)

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the assessment of the Global Mechanism of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (A/64/379)

Item 53 (f)
Convention on Biological Diversity

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (A/64/202)

Item 53 (g)
Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session

Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fifth session, Nairobi, 16-20 February 2009 (A/64/25 (Supplement No. 25))[1]

Item 53 (h)
Sustainable mountain development

Report of the Secretary-General on sustainable mountain development (A/64/222)

Item 53 (i)
Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy

Report of the Secretary-General on the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (A/64/277)

4. At the 27th meeting, on 2 November, an opening statement was made by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs (see A/C.2/64/SR.27).

5. At the same meeting, introductory statements were made by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action and Assistant Secretary-General for Disaster Risk Reduction (under sub-item 53 (c)); the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Secretariat (under sub-item 53 (e) and, on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Secretariat (under sub-item 53 (d)); the Director of the Division for Sustainable Development (under sub-items (a), (b) and (i)); the Director of the Liaison Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (under sub-item 53 (h)); the Director and Regional Representative, United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for West Asia (under item 53); the Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, New York Liaison Office (under sub-item 53 (g)); the representative of the Joint Inspection Unit (under item 53); and the representative of the Chief Executives Board secretariat (under item 53).

6. At the 29th meeting, on 3 November, an introductory statement was made by the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity Secretariat (under sub-item 53 (f)) (see A/C.2/64/SR.29).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.20

7. At the 33rd meeting, on 10 November, the representative of the Sudan introduced, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, a draft resolution entitled "Oil slick on Lebanese shores" (A/C.2/64/L.20).

8. At its 35th meeting, on 17 November, the Committee was advised that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 25* (A/64/25).

9. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.20 by a recorded vote of 154 to 8, with 3 abstentions (see para. 15, draft resolution I). The voting was as follows:[2]

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Australia, Canada, Fiji, Israel, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Cameroon, Colombia, Panama.

10. Before the vote, a statement in explanation of vote was made by the representative of Israel. After the vote, a statement in explanation of vote was made by the representative of Lebanon (see A/C.2/64/SR.35).

B. Draft resolutions A/C.2/64/L.24** and A/C.2/64/L.24/Rev.1*

11. At the 34th meeting, on 12 November, the representative of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, on behalf of Algeria, Belarus, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cape Verde, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Eritrea, Georgia, Guatemala, Honduras, Mauritius, Nepal, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the

[2] Subsequently, the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina indicated that, had they been present, they would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

Grenadines, Seychelles and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Harmony with Mother Earth" (A/C.2/64/L.24**).

12. At its 39th meeting, on 4 December, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled "Harmony with Nature" (A/C.2/64/L.24/Rev.1*), submitted by Bolivia (Plurinational State of) on behalf of Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Georgia, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Mauritius, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia and Zimbabwe. Subsequently, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Guinea, Haiti, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Mali, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saudi Arabia, Solomon Islands, Tunisia and the United Republic of Tanzania joined in sponsoring the revised draft resolution.

13. At the same meeting, the Committee was advised that the revised draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

14. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.24/Rev.1* (see para. 15, draft resolution II).

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

15. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
Oil slick on Lebanese shores

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 61/194 of 20 December 2006, 62/188 of 19 December 2007 and 63/211 of 19 December 2008 on the oil slick on Lebanese shores,

Reaffirming the outcome of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, especially principle 7 of the Declaration of the Conference,[1] in which States were requested to take all possible steps to prevent pollution of the seas,

Emphasizing the need to protect and preserve the marine environment in accordance with international law,

Taking into account the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[2] especially principle 16, in which it was stipulated that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, and taking into account also chapter 17 of Agenda 21,[3]

Noting again with great concern the environmental disaster caused by the destruction by the Israeli Air Force on 15 July 2006 of the oil storage tanks in the direct vicinity of El-Jiyeh electric power plant in Lebanon, resulting in an oil slick that covered the entirety of the Lebanese coastline and extended to the Syrian coastline,

Noting again with appreciation the assistance offered by donor countries and international organizations for the clean-up operations and the early recovery and reconstruction of Lebanon through bilateral and multilateral channels, including the Athens Coordination Meeting on the response to the marine pollution incident in the Eastern Mediterranean, held on 17 August 2006, as well as the Stockholm Conference for Lebanon's Early Recovery, held on 31 August 2006,

Taking note of the fact that the Secretary-General is currently finalizing the mechanism under which the Eastern Mediterranean Oil Spill Restoration Fund will operate,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 63/211 on the oil slick on Lebanese shores;[4]

2. *Reiterates the expression of its deep concern* about the adverse implications of the destruction by the Israeli Air Force of the oil storage tanks in the

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[1] See *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5-16 June 1972* (A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1), part one, chap. I.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] A/64/259.

direct vicinity of the Lebanese El-Jiyeh electric power plant for the achievement of sustainable development in Lebanon;

3. *Considers* that the oil slick has heavily polluted the shores of Lebanon and partially polluted Syrian shores and consequently has had serious implications for livelihoods and the economy of Lebanon, owing to the adverse implications for natural resources, biodiversity, fisheries and tourism, and for human health, in the country;

4. *Requests* the Government of Israel to assume responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to the Government of Lebanon and other countries directly affected by the oil slick, such as the Syrian Arab Republic whose shores have been partially polluted, for the costs of repairing the environmental damage caused by the destruction, including the restoration of the marine environment;

5. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts of the Government of Lebanon and those of the Member States, regional and international organizations, regional and international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in the initiation of clean-up and rehabilitation operations on the polluted shores, and encourages the Member States and above-mentioned entities to continue their financial and technical support to the Government of Lebanon towards achieving the completion of clean-up and rehabilitation operations, with the aim of preserving the ecosystem of Lebanon and that of the Eastern Mediterranean Basin;

6. *Reaffirms* its decision to establish an Eastern Mediterranean Oil Spill Restoration Trust Fund, based on voluntary contributions, to provide assistance and support to the States directly adversely affected in their integrated environmentally sound management, from clean-up to safe disposal of oily waste, of this environmental disaster resulting from the destruction of the oil storage tanks at El-Jiyeh electric power plant, and requests the Secretary-General to continue working towards the hosting and operationalization of the Trust Fund and to promptly finalize the implementation of that decision before the end of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly;

7. *Invites* States, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to make voluntary financial contributions to the Trust Fund, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to mobilize international technical and financial assistance in order to finalize the mechanism under which the Trust Fund will operate;

8. *Recognizes* the multidimensionality of the adverse impact of the oil slick, and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Sustainable development".

Draft resolution II
Harmony with Nature

The General Assembly,

Expressing its concern over the documented environmental degradation and the negative impact on nature resulting from human activity,

Recalling the 1982 World Charter for Nature,[1]

Reaffirming the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development,[2]

Reaffirming also Agenda 21[3] and the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21,[4] the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[5] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[6]

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[7]

Reaffirming its resolution 63/278 of 22 April 2009, on the designation of International Mother Earth Day,

Convinced that humanity can and should live in harmony with nature,[8]

1. *Invites* Member States, the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, and international, regional and subregional organizations to consider, as appropriate, the issue of promoting life in harmony with nature and to transmit to the Secretary-General their views, experiences and proposals on this issue;

2. *Also invites* all Member States, the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, and international, regional and subregional organizations to make use of International Mother Earth Day, as appropriate, to promote activities and exchange opinions and views on conditions, experiences and principles for a life in harmony with nature;

3. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fifth session a sub-item entitled "Harmony with Nature", under the item entitled "Sustainable development";

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its sixty-fifth session, a report on this theme, taking into account the views and comments received in relation to the present resolution.

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[1] Resolution 37/7, annex.

[2] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Rio de Janeiro, 3-14 June 1992*, vol. I, *Resolutions Adopted by the Conference* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.93.I.8 and corrigendum), resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] Resolution S-19/2, annex.

[5] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. S.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[6] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[7] See resolution 60/1.

[8] See resolution 35/7.